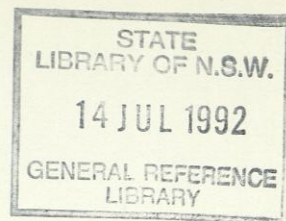


STATISTICAL
FILE



1990-91
Employment Injuries
Tasmania

Catalogue Number 6301.6

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**Employment Injuries
Tasmania
1990-91**

John Pollard

Acting Deputy Commonwealth Statistician

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Hobart

Catalogue number 6301.6

Employment Injuries, 1990-91

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Inquiries

Inquiries

Inquiries about these statistics, and other unpublished data, may be made by calling Hobart (002) 20 5836 (Jenny Spencer). For other inquiries, including copies of publications, call the Information Officer on Hobart (002) 20 5800. The Tasmanian Office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics is located on the 1st Floor, 175 Collins Street, Hobart (GPO Box 66A, Hobart, 7001).

Introduction

This bulletin presents statistics of Tasmanian employee injuries compiled from reports of workers' compensation claims for accidents and diseases occurring during 1990-91. The reports are supplied by insurance companies, self-insurers and State Government departments.

Employment injuries

Until 1986-87 this publication was titled Industrial Accidents, Tasmania. The change to Employment Injuries, Tasmania has been made to reflect more accurately the content of the publication and the collection.

Accidents are generally thought of as sudden, unwanted and unforeseen occurrences. This publication also includes statistics on *diseases* which, though unwanted and unforeseen, often develop over a long period. These, together, are designated *employment injuries* because not only are occurrences at work collected (*occupational injuries*), but so are compensatable occurrences on the way to and from work (*journey cases*).

Variations in reporting

The Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Department of Employment, Industrial Relations and Training, Labour and Industry Division, have worked closely with insurers to make sure the coverage and accuracy of the collection is as high as possible. Insurers generally have been co-operative, but there is no fool-proof way of checking whether reports have been received for all claims coming within the scope of the collection.

Differences in the numbers of reports received from year to year may be due as much to variations in coverage as to changes in accident experience. Care should therefore be taken when looking at trends in the numbers of accidents and diseases reported over time.

Value of statistics

The main value of the statistics lies in the detailed analysis possible, demonstrated by the range of cross-classified variables available in tables in this publication. Employment injuries are classified by industry and occupation groups, agencies and types of accidents, type and bodily location of injuries, time and day of occurrence and so on.

Additional information

Additional information is readily available for those tables for which only persons or general data are shown in this bulletin. A more detailed industry or occupation break-up is also available. In addition, other tables can be produced on request, using any of the data items supplied on the reporting form.

Scope of the Collection

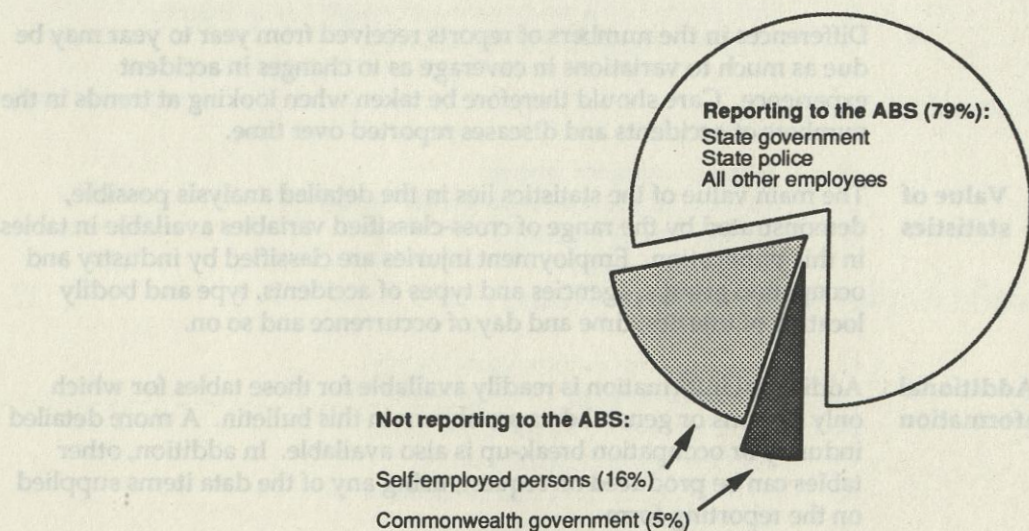
Collection period	The statistics represent employment injuries reported by insurers as occurring during 1990-91. Estimates have been made by insurers for those employment injuries which occurred during this time but were not finalised by the time the collection was closed off in March 1992.
Who is included	The statistics relate to persons covered under the <i>Tasmanian Workers' Compensation Act 1988</i> who have lost one complete day (or shift) or more, not counting any time lost on the day (or shift) of the occurrence.

Also included are police officers and State government employees. This means that about 79 per cent of the working population falls within the scope of the collection.

(The *coverage* is the extent to which the 79 per cent within the scope of the collection are represented in the collection.)

Workers not included in the collection consist of self-employed persons (about 16 per cent), and Commonwealth government employees (about five per cent).

Graph 1. Composition of total employment



Effect of exclusions	The exclusion of self-employed persons is likely to have a marked effect on statistics for industries where self-employment is common; for example, construction rural, and transport industries.
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Defence services and communications are industries which are not covered at all, and others have reduced coverage due to the exclusion of Commonwealth government employees.

Re-opened claims	Only original claims are covered by the tables and graphs in this bulletin. During 1990-91 there were 53 re-opened claims reported. These added a further estimated \$195 589 to the cost of employee injuries.
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This year in brief

The community is likely to be aware of the cost in human terms of deaths and injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents; these tend to be well reported on television, radio and in the press.

Road traffic accidents

While it is true that road accident fatalities outnumber industrial fatalities, there are many more people injured in the course of their work than on the road. For every person reported injured in a traffic accident, there are seven people reporting employment injuries.

Table 1. Road traffic accidents and employment injuries, 1990-91

	Road traffic accidents(a)		Employment injuries	
	Deaths	Injuries	Deaths	Injuries
Males	59	847	3	7 685
Females	9	412	0	2 188
Persons	68	1 259	3	9 873

(a) Source data: *Accident Research & Prevention, Road Safety Department, Transport Tasmania.*

Employment injury numbers

There were 9876 employment injury claims reported as occurring during the 1990-91 financial year. This is a decrease of 1666 from the 11 542 reported as occurring in 1989-90.

Reports of employment injuries to men decreased by 18.5 per cent, from the 9428 reported in 1989-90 to 7688 in 1990-91. Reports involving women continued to increase: 2188 for 1990-91 compared to 2114 in the previous year, an increase of 3.5 per cent.

Diseases

Of the 9876 claims reported, 330 were identified as diseases while 9546 related to accidents. Diseases accounted for slightly more than three per cent of all reports, a figure consistent with the pattern of previous years.

Deaths

In 1990-91, there were three deaths reported, all male. Compensation paid on this was an estimated \$213 761.

Extent of disability

In addition to the three deaths, there were a further two cases where the injured people were unable to resume work as a result of their injuries. These are described as *permanent total disability* cases.

These, and fatalities, because there is no resumption of work, are not used in the calculation of average time lost and average daily compensation figures.

There were also 25 cases where the people were able to resume work, but in a reduced capacity and with a subsequent loss of earnings, due to *permanent partial disabilities*.

Temporary disabilities accounted for the remaining 9846 reports, over 99 per cent of all claims.

While generally considered to be less serious than the other three types of disabilities, temporary disabilities can nevertheless involve a considerable amount of time off work and medical treatment before the affected people can resume normal duties.

Compensation For the year, an estimated total of \$21.4m was paid in compensation for all original claims reported to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, \$1.3m less than the amount estimated in 1989-90. This gives an average cost for each non-fatal claim of \$2100, and an average of \$92 for each day lost for temporary and permanent partial disability cases. In 1989-90 the average cost for each day lost was \$96.

The average cost for non-fatal claims involving men was \$2118, with a daily cost of \$101; for women it was \$2039 with a daily cost of \$70.

Table 2. Cost of claims by industry

	Cost of claims for non-fatal injuries		
	Total cost	Average per claim	Average per day(a)
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	1 051 156	2 190	81
Community services	3 734 223	2 159	78
Construction	1 255 416	1 751	92
Electricity, gas and water	643 543	1 562	106
Finance, property and business services	463 974	2 812	98
Forestry and logging	666 763	3 455	128
Manufacturing	5 984 288	2 049	102
Mining	1 534 051	6 500	173
Public administration	1 361 821	2 115	73
Recreational, personal and other services	1 024 831	2 006	79
Transport and storage	1 276 684	2 518	106
Wholesale and retail trade	1 741 093	1 283	78
Total persons	20 737 843	2 100	92
Males	16 277 382	2 118	101
Females	4 460 461	2 039	70

(a) Permanent partial and temporary disability cases only.

Time lost The cost of employment injuries can also be measured in terms of time lost as a result of an accident or disease. This collection measures time lost in terms of calendar days: the total period between the time the person stopped work and the time he or she started work again, or was declared fit to start.

In 1990-91 a total of 222 623 days were lost, an average of 23 days for each claim. An increase over the previous year in which 230 423 days were lost, at an average of 20 days for each report.

The total time lost by men was 159 093 days, an average of 21 days per report, compared with the 18 days average reported in 1989-90. For women, time lost in total was 63 530 days, giving an average of 31 days compared with 25 the previous year.

Table 3. Time lost by industry

Type of employment	Time lost for non-fatal injuries		
	Total time lost		Average per person
	Full-time	Part-time	F/t only
	(days)	(days)	(days)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	11 683	1 285	27
Community services	42 263	5 762	29
Construction	13 494	122	19
Electricity, gas and water	6 037	38	15
Finance, property and business services	4 358	385	31
Forestry and logging	5 138	78	28
Manufacturing	55 720	1 313	19
Mining	8 796	81	38
Public administration	18 204	571	29
Recreational, personal and other services	10 774	2 257	24
Transport and storage	11 140	920	22
Wholesale and retail trade	18 934	3 270	15
Total persons	206 541	16 082	22
Males	152 678	6 415	21
Females	53 863	9 667	31

Type of Employment

Type of Employment indicates whether the worker was employed full-time or part-time. Overall, 6.9 per cent of injuries occur to those reported as working part-time.

Table 4. Employment injuries by industry and type of employment

	Type of employment		
	Full-time	Part-time	Total
	(number)	(number)	(number)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	438	42	480
Community Services	1 440	292	1 732
Construction	704	14	718
Electricity, gas and water	410	2	412
Finance, property and business services	141	24	165
Forestry and logging	185	8	193
Manufacturing	2 860	61	2 921
Mining	232	4	236
Public administration	618	26	644
Recreational, personal and other services	452	59	511
Transport and storage	496	11	507
Wholesale and retail trade	1 222	135	1 357
Total persons	9 198	678	9 876
Males	7 432	256	7 688
Females	1 766	422	2 188

Only 3.3 per cent of male employment injuries occurred to those who worked part-time, (about nine per cent of employed males) compared with 19.3 per cent for females who worked part-time (about 45 per cent of all employed females). These figures are a slight increase on those recorded in 1989-90, with 1.8 per cent and 16.7 per cent respectively.

The industry with the highest incidence of part-time injuries as a percentage of all injuries, was *Community services* with 16.9 per cent. This was closely followed by *Wholesale, and retail trade* with 9.9 per cent. These figures reflect the fact that there is a higher proportion of part-time workers in both *Community services* and *Wholesale, and retail trade*.

Time of occurrence

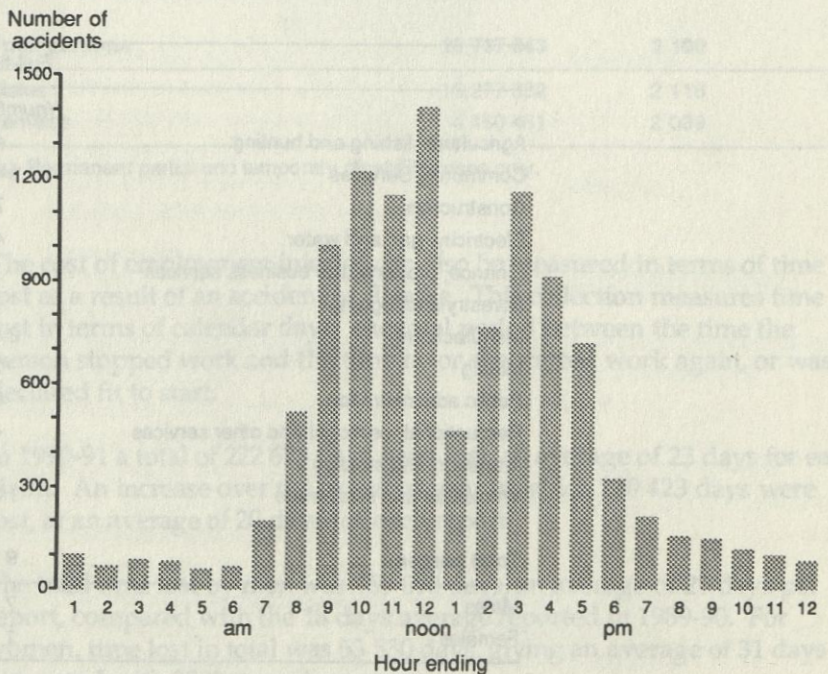
For most claims this information is readily available. In some cases, however, the actual time of the occurrence is not known. Many disease cases, for example, occur over a long period, the exact moment they start not being known. In other cases a trivial injury may develop into something more serious, the original injury having passed un-noticed.

Where the actual time is not known, the time the injury or disease was first noticed or first reported is asked for.

Graph 2 shows the distribution of employment injuries by time for 1990-91. Not surprisingly, few occur in the 'off-peak' hours; before 7 am, and most occur in conventional working hours.

The most noticeable feature of the graph is the peak on either side of the conventional lunch hour. It is interesting to note that a third of all accidents occur within the three hours preceding midday.

Graph 2. Employment injuries by hour of occurrence



Historical trends

Numbers of employment injuries

Over the period 1981-82 to 1990-91, the number of employment injuries reported has remained fairly close to 10 000 each financial year. Differences in numbers reported may be due as much to variations in coverage as to changes in accident experience, so care should be taken when looking for trends in the numbers reported over time.

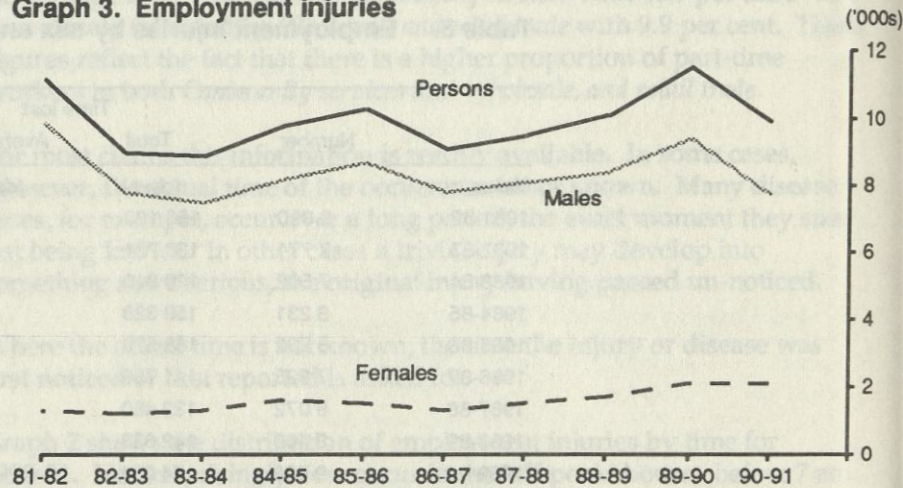
Table 5. Employment injuries by sex and year

	Number	Time lost		Compensation	
		Total	Average	Total	Average
		(days)	(days)	(\$M)	(\$ per day)
Males					
1981-82	9 890	156 120	16	12.4	69
1982-83	7 771	138 721	18	11.8	73
1983-84	7 502	129 810	17	10.7	71
1984-85	8 231	159 328	19	14.2	76
1985-86	8 732	168 579	19	13.7	79
1986-87	7 835	141 736	18	14.5	92
1987-88	8 072	132 460	16	15.2	109
1988-89	8 409	142 633	17	16.7	104
1989-90	9 428	174 034	18	18.8	105
1990-91	7 688	159 093	21	17.0	101
Females					
1981-82	1 309	30 077	23	1.7	46
1982-83	1 233	26 675	22	2.1	59
1983-84	1 286	23 110	18	1.5	56
1984-85	1 564	38 947	25	2.6	58
1985-86	1 543	44 831	29	3.1	59
1986-87	1 255	29 067	23	2.4	72
1987-88	1 458	21 123	14	1.8	83
1988-89	1 732	38 682	22	2.9	75
1989-90	2 114	56 389	27	3.9	69
1990-91	2 188	63 530	29	4.4	70
Persons					
1981-82	11 199	186 197	17	14.1	66
1982-83	9 004	165 396	18	13.9	70
1983-84	8 788	152 920	17	12.2	69
1984-85	9 795	198 275	20	16.8	72
1985-86	10 275	213 410	21	16.9	75
1986-87	9 090	170 803	19	16.9	89
1987-88	9 530	153 583	16	16.9	105
1988-89	10 141	181 315	18	19.6	98
1989-90	11 542	230 423	20	22.7	96
1990-91	9 876	222 623	23	21.4	92

From Table 5 above, it can be seen that there is a continuing trend towards growing numbers of women being injured in the workplace. In 1990-91 women accounted for 22.2 per cent of all accident reports, compared with 11.7 per cent in 1981-82. In 1981-82, for each woman reported injured, there were 7.6 men injured. This has increased steadily over the period, and at present the rate is one woman reported injured for every 3.5 men.

This can be partly accounted for by the fact the number of women in the workforce has increased substantially over the last ten years. Over this period women's numbers have increased by 31.3 per cent; for men, the increase has been only 1.9 per cent. Of all employed persons in 1990-91, women comprised 40.7 per cent.

Graph 3. Employment injuries

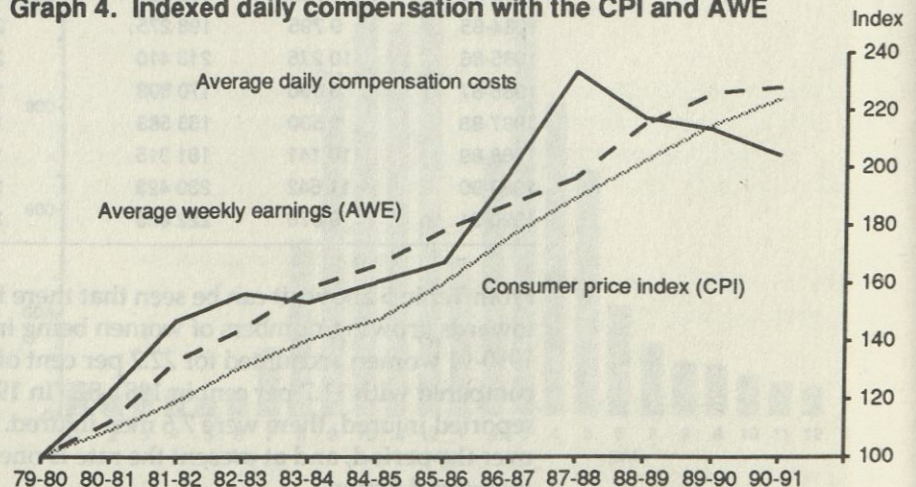


Compensation

An indicator often used to measure inflation is the Consumer Price Index (CPI). An index of daily compensation costs has been calculated using 1979-80 = 100.0 as a base year. Because compensation payments involve a large wage component, an index of average weekly earnings (AWE) for Tasmania has also been calculated. These have been plotted against the CPI for Hobart (also using 1979-80 as a base year) in the graph below.

The graph shows a relatively close correlation between CPI, AWE and average daily compensation costs in the period 1979-80 to 1985-86. The 1986-87 and 1987-88 period showed a sharp increase in average daily compensation costs in excess of CPI and AWE movements. Since 1987-88 average daily compensation costs have declined significantly in relation with CPI and AWE movements to a point where in 1990-91 average daily compensation is below the CPI for the first time in ten years.

Graph 4. Indexed daily compensation with the CPI and AWE



Incidence rates

While there is value in knowing the number of employment injuries occurring within a particular industry, this value is considerably enhanced if one knows the number of people employed within the industry at the time.

Knowing the employed population allows the calculation of *incidence rates*, and thus meaningful comparisons can be made between industries.

Average employment

Table 6 below shows the average employment by sex and industry for 1990-91 obtained from the ABS's Labour Force Survey and Survey of Employment and Earnings. It should be remembered that the figures **do not** represent all those who are employed. Excluded from the figures below are Commonwealth government employees and self-employed persons as they are not within the scope of the collection.

Table 6. Average employment by industry and sex

	Males	Females	Persons
	('000s)	('000s)	('000s)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	5.0	1.8	6.7
Community services	11.7	23.7	35.5
Construction	5.4	0.7	6.0
Electricity, gas and water	3.2	0.4	3.5
Finance, property and business services	6.3	6.4	12.6
Forestry and logging	1.3	0.1	1.4
Manufacturing	21.7	6.2	27.9
Mining	3.0	0.2	3.3
Public administration	5.7	3.0	8.8
Recreational, personal and other services	4.1	7.3	11.4
Transport and storage	4.1	1.2	5.3
Wholesale and retail trade	16.9	14.5	31.4
Total(a)	88.5	65.6	154.1

(a) Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding.

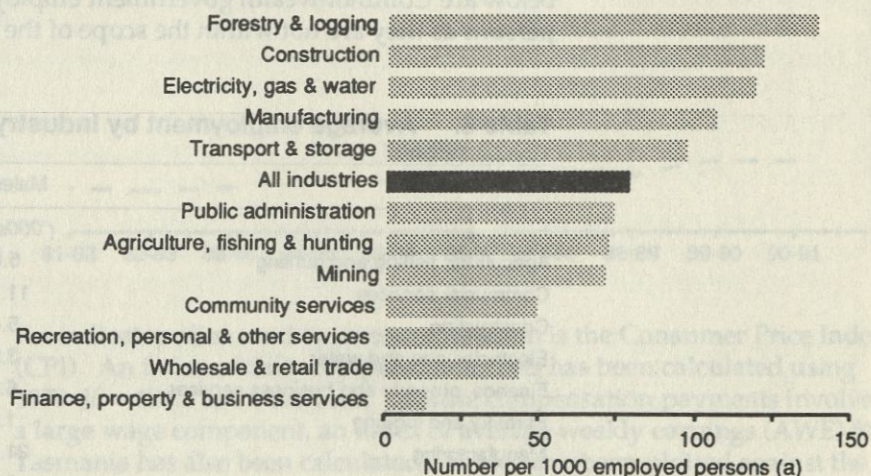
Table 7. Distribution of employment and employment injuries

	Employment	Accidents	Diseases
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	4.3	4.8	8.2
Community services	23.0	17.4	22.4
Construction	3.9	7.4	3.6
Electricity, gas and water	2.3	4.2	3.9
Finance, property and business services	8.2	1.6	2.7
Forestry and logging	0.9	2.0	1.8
Manufacturing	18.1	29.6	27.6
Mining	2.1	2.4	2.1
Public administration	5.7	6.4	8.8
Recreational, personal and other services	7.4	5.1	6.7
Transport and storage	3.4	5.3	1.2
Wholesale and retail trade	20.4	13.8	10.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Employment injuries distribution If all industries were equally hazardous in which to work, the distribution of employment injuries should match the distribution of the employed population working in them. Obviously some industries present more hazards than others. This can be seen in the preceding table (Table 7).

Construction, for example, employs 3.9 per cent of the collected population, but accounted for 7.4 per cent of reported employment injuries in 1990-91. *Finance, property and business services*, on the other hand, though employing a bigger proportion (8.1 per cent), reported only 1.6 per cent of accidents.

Graph 5. Employment injury incidence rates



(a) Excludes Commonwealth government and self-employed

Incidence rates From graph 5 it can be seen that the *Forestry and logging* industry group experienced more employment injuries (138) for every thousand people employed than did other industry groups. The average for all industries was 64 employment injuries per 1000, a decrease from the 74 per 1000 reported in 1989-90.

Those sectors of Tasmanian industry at the lower end of the scale were the service industries. Lowest of all was *Finance, property and business services* (13 per 1000), followed by *Wholesale, and retail trade* with 43 per 1000.

Some care should be taken in how these figures are interpreted. It should not be assumed, for example, that forestry workers or construction workers are more careless or accident prone than real estate agents. The hazards they face each day in the normal course of their work are more numerous, therefore the risk of experiencing employment injuries is much greater.

The incidence of diseases, remains very low in comparison with accidents. Only 1 out of 30 employment injuries is reported as a disease. (The actual rate is 2.1 per 1000, compared with 2.3 for 1989-90.)

As can be expected, men have a higher employment injury rate than women, 87 per 1000 men employed compared with 34 per 1000 for women.

This suggests that men are almost three times as likely to be injured at work than women. However, because men are more likely to be employed in the higher risk occupations, not surprisingly, their injury rate is higher.

Table 8. Incidence rates by Industry and sex

	1989-90	1990-91		
	Persons	Persons	Males	Females
	(rate)	(rate)	(rate)	(rate)
Agriculture, fishing, hunting	96	72	76	56
Community services	39	49	62	42
Construction	162	120	129	30
Electricity, gas and water	121	118	126	23
Finance, property and business services	15	13	10	15
Forestry and logging	172	138	142	90
Manufacturing	138	105	120	50
Mining	153	72	75	50
Public administration	60	73	97	30
Recreational, personal and other services	39	45	69	31
Transport and storage	94	96	119	18
Wholesale and retail trade	55	43	63	20
Total	74	64	87	33
Accidents	71	62	85	31
Diseases	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1

In general, the pattern as shown in Table 8, has remained consistent over the four years that incidence rates have been calculated.

With a high of 278 injuries per 1000 employed in 1986-87, the first year of publication, the *Mining* industry had significantly the highest rate of injury incidence. During the past three years incidence rates in the *Mining* industry have declined consistently each year to a level of 71 injuries per 1000 employed in 1990-91, a level which is now below the average incidence of all industries.

At present *Forestry and logging* has the highest incident rate of injury (138 per 1000) and *Finance, property and business services*, the lowest with 13 per 1000.

The greatest increase in rate over the period 1989-90 to 1990-91 was experienced in *Community services* (25 per cent), the greatest decrease was the 53 per cent reduction in incidence for *Mining*.

In general, the industries with the greatest variability of rates have comparatively low employment levels with the result that small movements tend to be exaggerated.

Industrial diseases

Employment injury reports sent to the Australian Bureau of Statistics contain descriptions of the events leading to the report. *Nature of injury* codes are given on the basis of these descriptions.

Disease coding If a recognised medical condition is described, a code from the *International Classification of Diseases (9th Revision)* (ICD) can be given. Around three per cent of all reports each year fall into this category.

Undoubtedly, the number of disease conditions that occur each year is understated. It is quite possible, for example, for a condition such as *bursitis* to be reported simply as a 'strain'. It would then miss out on being coded as a disease.

In 1990-91 there were 330 reports given ICD classifications, 3.3 per cent of the total of 9876 received. This was slightly higher than the figures for 1989-90 (3.1 per cent of all reports). However, because of the low proportion of diseases reported each year, the movements from year to year tend to be exaggerated.

While in many cases the distinction between accidents and diseases is blurred, it is nevertheless useful to examine the occurrences commonly classified as diseases.

Table 9. Types of reported diseases

	Number	Average leave (days)	Average compensation (\$ per claim)
ICD 133: <i>Acariasis</i> (Scabies, mites, etc.)	20	5	325
ICD 354: <i>Mononeuritis of upper limb and mononeuritis multiplex</i> (Carpal tunnel syndrome, etc.)	14	39	3 707
ICD 360-379: <i>Disorders of the eye and adnexa</i>	18	6	433
ICD 460-519: <i>Diseases of the respiratory system</i>	20	56	8 126
ICD 692: <i>Contact dermatitis and other eczema</i>	64	18	1 038
ICD 726: <i>Peripheral enthesopathies and allied syndromes</i> (Bursitis, rotator cuff syndrome, etc.)	20	14	1 675
ICD 727: <i>Other disorders of synovium, tendon and bursa</i> (Synovitis, tenosynovitis, etc.)	123	47	3 317
Other reported disease conditions	51	35	4 601
Total persons	330	33	2 943
Males	190	30	3 189
Females	140	37	2 610

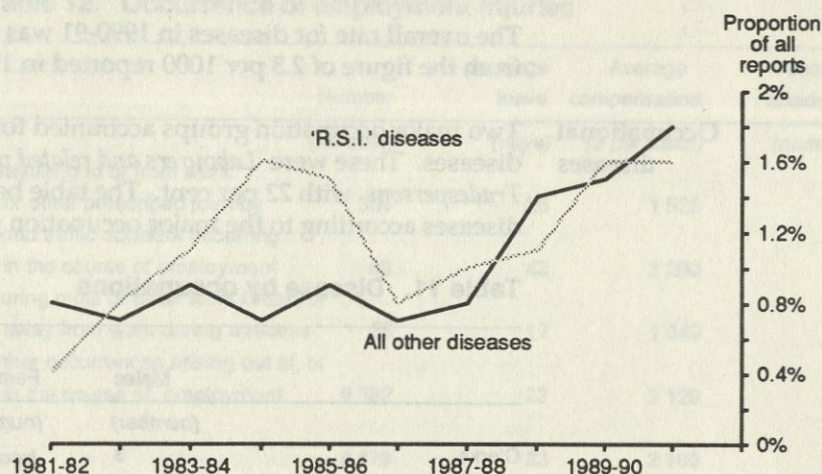
By far the most prevalent conditions in 1990-91 were those resulting from occupational over-use or repetitive movement. These appear in the table above as ICD 354, ICD 726 and ICD 727 and comprise the *repetitive strain injury* (R.S.I.) or *occupational overuse syndrome* (O.O.S.) group of conditions. They accounted for 48 per cent of the diseases reported.

Disease trends

Diseases, with the exception of the so-called 'R.S.I.' or 'O.O.S.' group mentioned above, have remained at a fairly stable level except for a slight increase over the last three years.

The 'R.S.I.' types experienced a dramatic increase in incidence between 1980 and 1986, peaking to 1.6 per cent of all reports in 1984-85, before dropping to be more in line with the incidence of 'other' diseases. Currently both the 'R.S.I.' type diseases and 'other' diseases appear to be at around the same level of incidence in the workplace and increasing at approximately the same rate.

Graph 6. Incidence of 'R.S.I.' and other disease conditions



Diseases in industry

Table 10 shows that the greatest number of diseases was reported in *Manufacturing* industries. This group consistently accounts for around one third of all diseases that have occurred in the workplace, a figure which is fairly consistent with employment levels.

Table 10. Number of diseases reported by industry

	1989-90	1990-91		
	Persons	Persons	Males	Females
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	40	27	17	10
Community services	61	74	18	56
Construction	45	12	11	1
Electricity, gas and water	6	13	12	1
Finance, property and business services	13	9	1	8
Forestry and logging	6	6	6	-
Manufacturing	116	91	66	25
Mining	5	7	7	-
Public administration	17	29	19	10
Recreational, personal and other services	15	22	7	15
Transport and storage	4	4	3	1
Wholesale and retail trade	31	36	23	13
Total	359	330	190	140

Because the number of diseases reported by industry each year is very small, specially when compared with the population employed in those industries, it is difficult to calculate meaningful incidence rates. It would appear that *Forestry and logging* had the highest rate with 4.3 cases for every 1000 people employed, followed by *Agriculture, fishing and hunting* with 4.0 cases per 1000. Following that are *Electricity, gas and water* with 3.7 per cent and *Public administration*, and *Manufacturing* both with 3.3 per cent.

Transport and storage and *Finance, property and business services*, were the industry groups with the lowest rate with only 0.8 and 0.7 reports per 1000 employed respectively.

The overall rate for diseases in 1990-91 was 2.1 per 1000, a slight decrease from the figure of 2.3 per 1000 reported in 1989-90.

Occupational diseases

Two major occupation groups accounted for 61 per cent of all reported diseases. These were *Labourers and related workers* with 39 per cent and *Tradespersons* with 22 per cent. The table below shows the distribution of diseases according to the major occupation groups.

Table 11. Disease by occupations

	Males (number)	Females (number)	Average leave (days)	Average compensation (\$ per claim)
Clerks	3	27	81	5 135
Labourers and related workers	73	56	27	2 218
Managers and administrators	2	-	25	2 290
Para-professionals	4	15	39	3 445
Personal service and sales	6	20	36	3 615
Plant and machine operators	36	4	22	2 421
Professionals	6	7	45	3 417
Tradespersons	60	11	24	3 181
All reported diseases	190	140	33	2 943
All employment injuries	7 688	2 188	23	2 100

Because of the small numbers of diseases reported, average leave figures fluctuate from year to year. In 1990-91, the occupation groups with the longest average time off work as a result of their conditions were *Clerks* with 81 days and *Professionals* with an average of 45 days per claim.

These were both considerably more than the average of 33 days per claim for all diseases, or the average for all employment injuries of 23 days per claim.

Not surprisingly the average cost for claims was higher than for accidents; \$2943 for diseases compared to \$2100 for accidents.

General employment injuries statistics

In the summary of the year's statistics in this publication a comparison was drawn between road traffic accidents and employment injuries.

Occurrence of injuries

In fact, there is some overlap between the two sets of statistics. Of the 9876 employment injuries reported, 267 were described as vehicle accidents. Road traffic accidents occurring in the course of employment accounted for 42 of these. The majority (164) of the rest happened on the way to or from work.

Table 12. Occurrence of employment injuries

	Number	Average leave	Average compensation	Vehicle accidents
	(number)	(days)	(\$ per claim)	(number)
Travelling to or from work or other prescribed journey	369	25	1 523	164
Road traffic accident occurring in the course of employment	69	43	2 200	42
During meal or other work break, or away from work during a recess	56	17	1 049	8
Other occurrences arising out of, or in the course of, employment	9 382	22	2 129	53
Total	9 876	23	2 100	267

Occurrences on the way to and from work do not have to be vehicle accidents. Many people injure themselves through, for example, accidental falls and trips.

Table 13. Nature of injuries

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per claim)
Burns	433	67	9	942
Concussion and other head injuries	46	19	11	1 038
Contusions and crushings	1 200	322	16	1 547
Dislocations, sprains and strains	3 373	1 241	27	2 335
Fractures	362	75	51	5 000
Open wounds	1 363	212	14	1 377
Poisonings	51	16	20	2 678
Superficial injuries	563	42	5	440
Other, unspecified, and multiple injuries	107	54	68	8 214
Reported diseases	190	140	33	2 943
Total	7 688	2 188	23	2 100

Nature of injuries Table 12 shows that accidents involving travelling to or from work, and road traffic accidents occurring in the course of employment, involve more time lost than other occurrences. In part, this is due to the tendency for injuries to be more extensive in these types of accidents.

This is supported by data in Table 13. Injuries such as *Fractures* with an average of 51 days, and *Other, unspecified, and multiple injuries* with an average of 68 days, are consistent with vehicle accidents and involve far more time lost than the 23 days average for all injury types.

By far the most common injuries, however, are *Dislocations, sprains and strains*, with 47 per cent of all reports. Table 14 shows approximately half of these occurring to the trunk.

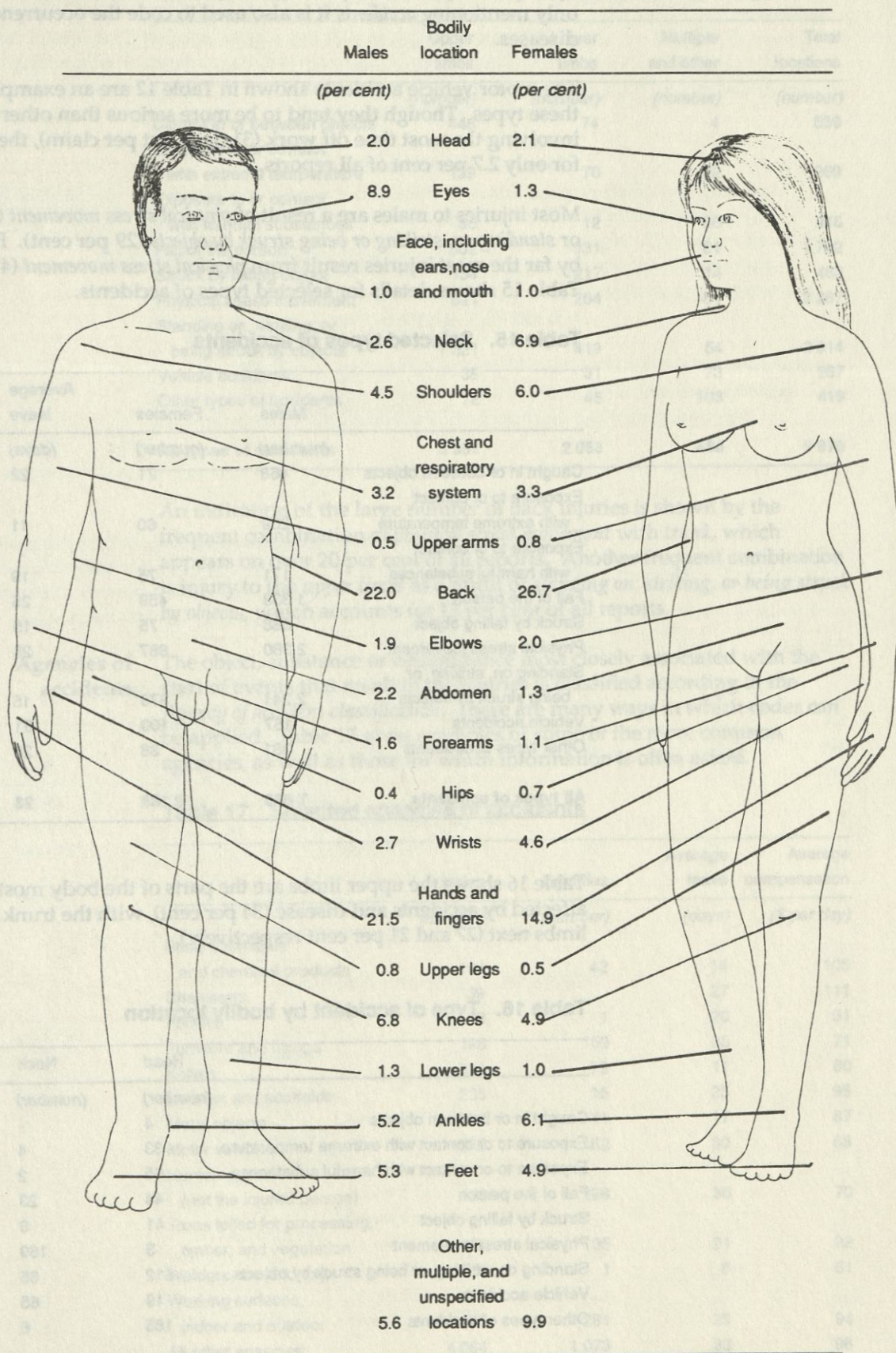
Table 14. Nature of injury by bodily location

	Head (number)	Neck (number)	Trunk (number)
Burns	226	4	11
Concussion, and other head injuries	65	-	-
Contusions and crushings	64	17	228
Dislocations, sprains and strains	1	311	2 283
Fractures	20	1	59
Open wounds	126	1	8
Poisonings	4	-	13
Superficial injuries	447	3	6
Other, multiple, and unspecified injuries	8	1	45
Reported diseases	25	2	19
Total	986	340	2 672
Males	894	196	2 027
Females	92	144	645

Table 14. Nature of injury by bodily location (continued)

	Upper limbs (number)	Lower limbs (number)	Multiple and other (number)	Total locations (number)
Burns	148	81	30	500
Concussion and other head injuries	-	-	-	65
Contusions and crushings	549	550	114	1 522
Dislocations, sprains and strains	904	1 013	102	4 614
Fractures	220	133	4	437
Open wounds	1 223	196	21	1 575
Poisonings	5	3	42	67
Superficial injuries	93	49	7	605
Other, unspecified, and multiple injuries	4	-	103	161
Reported diseases	191	28	65	330
Total	3 337	2 053	488	9 876
Males	2 632	1 635	304	7 688
Females	705	418	184	2 188

Diagram1. Distribution of employment injuries by bodily location



Types of accidents *Type of accident* is the way in which a person becomes injured. Though only mentioning *accidents* it is also used to code the occurrence of diseases.

The motor vehicle accidents shown in Table 12 are an example of one of these types. Though they tend to be more serious than other accidents, involving the most time off work (31 days lost per claim), they account for only 2.7 per cent of all reports.

Most injuries to males are a result of *physical stress movement* (31 per cent) or *standing on, striking or being struck by objects* (29 per cent). For females, by far the most injuries result from *physical stress movement* (41 per cent). Table 15 shows details for selected types of accidents.

Table 15. Selected types of accidents

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
Caught in or between objects	468	71	22	125
Exposure to or contact with extreme temperature	209	60	11	103
Exposure to or contact with harmful substances	171	75	19	89
Fall of the person	1 333	459	25	100
Struck by falling object	388	75	15	103
Physical stress movement	2 380	887	28	84
Standing on, striking, or being struck by objects	2 241	373	15	88
Vehicle accidents	167	100	31	73
Other types of accidents	331	88	28	119
All types of accidents	7 688	2 188	23	92

Table 16 shows the upper limbs are the parts of the body most often affected by accidents and disease (34 per cent), with the trunk and lower limbs next (27 and 21 per cent respectively).

Table 16. Type of accident by bodily location

	Head	Neck	Trunk
	(number)	(number)	(number)
Caught in or between objects	4	-	9
Exposure to or contact with extreme temperature	33	4	11
Exposure to or contact with harmful substances	65	2	26
Fall of the person	44	23	411
Struck by falling object	41	6	31
Physical stress movement	3	169	1 969
Standing on, striking, or being struck by objects	612	65	143
Vehicle accidents	19	65	44
Other types of accidents	165	6	28
All types of accidents	986	340	2 672

Table 16. Type of accident by bodily location (continued)

	Upper limbs	Lower limbs	Multiple and other	Total locations
	(number)	(number)	(number)	(number)
Caught in or between objects	448	74	4	539
Exposure to or contact with extreme temperature	129	70	22	269
Exposure to or contact with harmful substances	55	12	86	246
Fall of the person	302	931	81	1 792
Struck by falling object	154	217	14	463
Physical stress movement	821	254	51	3 267
Standing on, striking, or being struck by objects	1 321	419	54	2 614
Vehicle accidents	35	31	73	267
Other types of accidents	72	45	103	419
All types of accidents	3 337	2 053	488	9 876

An indication of the large number of back injuries is shown by the frequent combination of *physical stress movement* with *trunk*, which appears on over 20 per cent of all reports. Another frequent combination is injury to the *upper limbs* as a result of *standing on, striking, or being struck by objects*, which accounts for 13 per cent of all reports.

Agencies of accidents

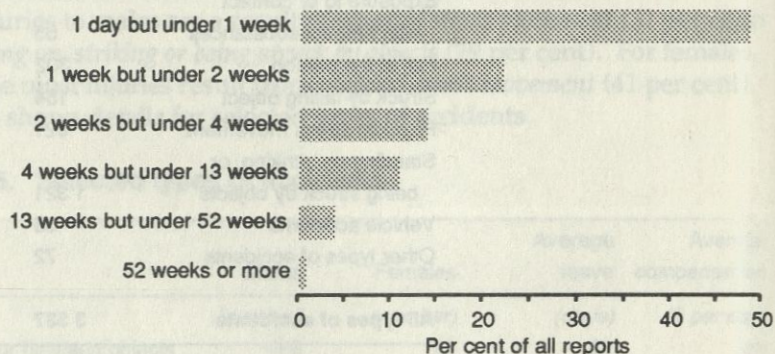
The object, substance or circumstance most closely associated with the start of events that result in the injuries is classified according to the *Agency of accident classification*. There are many ways in which codes can be applied. Table 17 gives examples of some of the more common agencies, as well as those for which information is often asked.

Table 17. Selected agencies of accidents

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
Basic chemicals and chemical products	194	42	14	105
Chainsaws	39	-	27	111
Forklifts	78	1	20	91
Furniture and fittings	196	159	25	71
Knives	321	79	11	80
Ladders and scaffolds	235	15	25	95
Metal objects	681	41	17	87
Motor vehicles	575	162	30	88
Human agencies (not the injured person)	138	299	36	70
Trees felled for processing, timber; and vegetation	456	35	21	92
Welders, arc and oxy	216	1	8	61
Working surfaces, indoor and outdoor	495	281	25	94
All other agencies	4 064	1 073	23	98
All agencies of accidents	7 688	2 188	23	92

Duration of leave Though many people are injured quite severely at work, and are away for long periods with high amounts of compensation being paid, it is significant that almost half the reports show a time loss of less than a week. Because only claims involving a time loss of one day or more are reported, the figures understate the number of employment injuries with a time loss of less than a week.

Graph 7. Duration of leave



A rule of thumb used throughout the industry is that there are as many injuries involving less than a day as there are one day or more. Because there are about 10 000 of the latter reported each year, it means that around 20 000 employment injuries occur in total each year.

Table 18. Leave shorter and longer than one week (a)

	Males	Females	Total leave	Total compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$)
1 day but under 1 week	3 837	942	15 254	1 831 484
1 week or more	3 846	1 246	207 369	18 716 359
Total	7 688	2 188	222 623	20 737 843

(a) excludes fatalities and permanent total disability cases.

Table 19. Duration of leave (a)

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
1 day but under 1 week	3 837	942	3	120
1 week but under 2 weeks	1 703	477	9	91
2 weeks but under 4 weeks	1 017	346	19	87
4 weeks but under 6 weeks	364	127	34	96
6 weeks but under 8 weeks	221	74	48	92
8 weeks but under 13 weeks	222	65	70	98
13 weeks but under 26 weeks	166	74	125	92
26 weeks but under 52 weeks	104	53	253	89
52 weeks or more	49	30	510	85
Total	7 688	2 188	23	92

(a) excludes fatalities and permanent total disability cases.

Table 18 shows that although injuries involving less than one week appear on around half the reports, they account for only 7 per cent of the time lost and 9 per cent of the compensation paid. Of interest is the fact that Table 19 shows daily compensation is highest for accidents where leave is less than one week and lowest for those with the longest duration of leave.

Selected industries

Tables elsewhere in this publication showing statistics for industry groups are, of necessity, fairly general. Table 20 gives statistics for industries about which information is often sought. The table shows that some specific industries experience quite costly claims; for example *Mining* with an average of \$173 per day, and *Manufacturing of paper and paper products* with an average of \$139 per day.

Of the selected industries, the *Retail and wholesale trade* industries appear to have relatively minor employment injuries, with less than average days away from work and less than average daily compensation.

Information on specific industries not included in the table can be made available on request to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Table 20. Selected industries

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
Agriculture and services to agriculture	323	82	29	72
Community services	729	1003	28	78
- hospitals and nursing homes	223	635	29	64
Forestry and logging	184	9	27	128
Manufacturing of				
- food, beverages and tobacco	659	160	24	97
- textiles, clothing and footwear	93	73	21	69
- wood, wood products and furniture	141	10	16	86
- paper and paper products	232	12	20	139
- basic and fabricated metal products	715	14	16	130
- miscellaneous manufacturing	244	20	22	73
Mining	226	10	38	173
Public administration	553	91	29	73
- local government	389	40	18	77
Recreational, personal and other services	284	227	26	79
- restaurants, hotels and accommodation	118	118	20	76
Retail trade	539	237	15	70
- grocers, confectioners and tobacconists	137	131	17	67
Wholesale trade	531	50	18	87
- building and hardware	178	6	15	71
All other industries	2 235	190	19	99
Total, all industries	7 688	2 188	23	92

Injuries by age A disproportionate number of injuries reported occur to workers in the 20-34 years age group. While comprising only 38.4 per cent of the workforce, they accounted for almost half (47.7 per cent) of all employment injuries.

While younger age groups experience more injuries in proportion to their representation in the workforce, their injuries can be seen as being less generally serious. This is supported by their shorter periods away from work in comparison with the overall average (23 days) and that of the older age groups.

Table 21. Employment injuries by age groups

	Males	Females	Average leave	Average compensation
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(\$ per day)
Under 20 years	903	205	12	67
20 to 24 years	1 349	366	15	90
25 to 34 years	2 396	532	22	98
35 to 44 years	1 540	585	29	93
45 to 54 years	920	372	30	88
55 to 64 years	457	103	27	108
65 years and over	9	-	127	46
Age not stated	114	25	19	89
Total	7 688	2 188	23	92

Occupational injuries

As can be seen in Table 22, *Professionals* experience the highest average daily compensation payouts, \$117 per day, with *Plant and machine operators* following with \$115. All other occupation groups are below the average (\$92 per day) with *Clerks* the lowest, with only \$66 per day.

Table 22. Cost of claims by occupation groups

Cost of claims for non-fatal injuries			
	Total cost	Average per claim	Average per day(a)
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)
Clerks	550 762	1 893	66
Labourers and related workers	6 755 830	2 009	88
Managers and administrators	398 380	2 142	82
Para-professionals	1 537 267	2 726	80
Personal service and sales	956 305	1 520	70
Plant and machine operators	5 126 176	2 916	115
Professionals	1 109 097	4 154	117
Tradespersons	4 304 026	1 528	90
Total persons	20 737 843	2 100	92

(a) excludes fatalities and permanent total disability cases

Professionals and Para-professionals have the longest periods off work with 35 and 34 days on average. Tradespersons have the shortest time away from work (16 days).

Table 23. Time lost by occupation groups

	Males	Females	Total	Average
	(number)	(number)	leave(a)	leave(a)
			(days)	(days)
Clerks	89	202	8 373	29
Labourers and related workers	2 553	809	76 461	23
Managers and administrators	156	31	4 862	26
Para-professionals	278	287	19 229	34
Personal service and sales	182	447	13 708	22
Plant and machine operators	1 631	127	44 758	25
Professionals	143	125	9 464	35
Tradespersons	2 656	160	45 768	16
Total	7 688	2 188	222 623	23

(a) excludes fatalities and permanent total disability cases.

National Data Set Statistics

Employment injuries statistics for the whole of Australia are hard to come by, mainly because there is no national collection as such. Each State's collection is controlled by its own legislation, with resulting differences between States in scope, definitions and other aspects of the collection.

Worksafe Australia

Worksafe Australia is a Commonwealth organisation involved in occupational health and safety matters, and is charged with the task of trying to produce National statistics. In doing this it has to compile elements common to all the States' collections to assemble a *National Data Set*.

The following tables for 1990-91 are constructed to meet National Data Set requirements. Because Tasmanian statistics are already very close to those required for the National Data Set, there are only a few modifications needed.

The two main differences between these and other tables in this publication are:

- National tables include only those reports involving a time loss of one week or more.
- *Journey cases* (occurrences on the way to and from work) are excluded, as are *Recess cases* (occurrences during recesses or work breaks).

Table 18 presented earlier shows that the effect of these exclusions is to cut by about half the number of reportable injuries.

Table 24. Cost of claims by major industry groups, Tasmania(a)

	Cost of claims for non-fatal injuries		
	Total cost	Average per claim	Average per day(b)
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	986 062	3 343	80
Forestry and logging	627 980	5 981	129
Mining	1 435 958	11 046	169
Manufacturing	5 019 695	3 721	99
Electricity, gas and water	552 326	2 776	108
Construction	1 038 927	3 111	93
Wholesale and retail trade	1 479 138	2 520	78
Transport and storage	1 157 615	4 210	105
Finance, property and business services	429 114	5 573	100
Public administration	1 181 370	3 485	73
Community services	3 342 892	3 678	76
Recreational, personal and other services	910 592	3 449	80
Total persons	18 161 669	3 735	92
Males	14 201 971	3 826	100
Females	3 959 698	3 440	70

(a) Journey cases excluded. Cases involving a time loss of one week or more.

(b) Permanent partial and temporary disability cases only.

Table 25. Time lost by major industry groups, Tasmania(a)

	Males	Females	Total leave(b)	Average leave(b)
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(days)
Agriculture, fishing and hunting	232	63	12 283	42
Forestry and logging	104	1	4 879	46
Mining	126	4	8 473	65
Manufacturing	1 190	159	50 485	37
Electricity, gas and water	196	3	5 128	26
Construction	325	9	11 202	34
Wholesale and retail trade	444	143	18 927	32
Transport and storage	264	11	11 062	40
Finance, property & business services	34	43	4 284	56
Public administration	284	55	16 089	47
Community services	365	544	43 718	48
Recreational, personal and other services	148	116	11 436	43
Total	3 712	1 151	197 966	41

See footnotes at the bottom of the page.

Table 26. Cost of claims by major occupation groups, Tasmania(a)

Cost of claims for non-fatal injuries

	Total cost	Average per claim	Average per day(b)
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)
Managers and administrators	362 340	3 235	80
Professionals	985 866	7 887	119
Para-professionals	1 405 101	4 684	78
Tradespersons	3 437 129	2 808	88
Clerks	460 833	3 809	69
Personal service and sales	810 774	2 703	70
Plant and machine operators	4 578 076	5 031	112
Labourers and related workers	6 121 550	3 457	89
Total persons	18 161 669	3 735	92

See footnotes at the bottom of the page.

Table 27. Time lost by major occupation groups, Tasmania(a)

	Males	Females	Total leave(b)	Average leave(b)
	(number)	(number)	(days)	(days)
Managers and administrators	95	17	4 510	40
Professionals	70	55	8 288	66
Para-professionals	140	160	18 050	60
Tradespersons	1 143	81	39 039	32
Clerks	38	83	6 646	55
Personal service and sales	85	215	11 516	38
Plant and machine operators	840	70	40 797	45
Labourers and related workers	1 301	470	69 120	39
Total	3 712	1 151	197 966	41

(a) Journey cases excluded. Cases involving a time loss of one week or more.

(b) Permanent partial and temporary disability cases only.

Definitions and other information

The following definitions have been adopted for this collection:

Employment injury: An *employment injury* results in a compensatable claim under the Workers' Compensation Act 1988, and has the following characteristics:

- The employment injury arises out of a work-related event.
- It leads to a loss of time of one complete day (or shift) or more, not counting any time lost on the day (or shift) of the occurrence.
- It results in either a temporary or permanent total incapacity, or death.
- It involves a claim for payment.

Type of accident: The *type of accident* is currently defined as the manner of contact of the injured person with the object or substance, or the exposure or movement of the injured person which resulted in the injury or disease.

In some cases the choice between the above alternatives results in conflict; e.g. a worker falls from a ladder and grabs a hot pipe to prevent fall. In the first alternative this would relate to the hot pipe. In the second it would refer to the fall from a height. In such situations the type of accident is selected according to which event caused the more severe injury.

The type of accident is classified according to the *Type of Accident Classification*.

Agency of accident: The *agency of accident* is currently defined as the object, substance or action most closely associated with the start of the events that led to the injury or disease and which in general could have been guarded against or corrected.

A distinction should be made between the *agency of injury* and *agency of accident*; for example, a fire damp explosion results in a miner being crushed by a beam. The agency of the accident is the material responsible for the fire damp explosion, while the agency of the injury is the beam itself.

The agency of accident is classified according to *Agency of Accident Classification*.

Cost of claims: The *cost of claims* consists of all compensation for claims reported during the financial year including the following:

- wages lost;
- hospital and medical expenses;
- legal costs (excluding common law claims); and
- lump sum settlements.

Where final details are unavailable, insurers are asked to provide estimates. This is most likely to occur in those cases involving fatalities or serious injuries. Care must therefore be taken before drawing conclusions based on variations in cost of claims patterns.

Time lost: The *time lost* is the period of time between the date ceased work due to the employment injury and the date work was resumed or the person was declared fit to resume work.

This is not necessarily the paid time lost. It includes paid days off but may also include weekends, holidays or periods for which compensation was not paid. An injured person may not necessarily be prevented from working in a second job during this period.

In the case where several periods of absence are involved it is the sum of those periods.

Date and time of employment injury: The *employment injury date* is the date the accident or disease was reported to have occurred. Similarly, the *time of employment injury* is the time of day the accident or disease was reported to have occurred.

In some cases, especially with diseases and conditions that develop slowly over a period of time, the actual time or date of the occurrence may not be known. In these the date and time the condition was first noticed or reported is accepted.

Time of employment injury was collected for the first time in 1987-88.

Extent of disability: The *extent of disability* is the degree to which a person is affected as a result of an employment injury, and is classified according to one of four outcomes as described below.

- A *temporary disability* is one where the person affected is able to resume work in his normal occupation after recovering.
- A *permanent partial disability* is one where, as a result of the employment injury, a person is both prevented from returning to his or her normal occupation and incurs a loss of earnings.
- A *permanent total disability* is where the employment injury renders the affected person totally and permanently unfit for any type of work
- A *death* is recorded if it is directly attributable to the injuries sustained.

Industry: The predominant *industry* undertaken at the location at which the employment injury occurred is classified according to the *Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC), 1983 edition*.

Occupation: The normal *occupation* of the affected person is classified according to the *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO), 1987 edition*. Prior to 1987-88 occupation was coded according to the *Classification and Classified List of Occupations (CCLO)*. Whilst not strictly comparable with years prior to 1987-88, it is still possible to produce time-series data for some specific occupations.

Definition of Type of employment: *Type of employment* was introduced for the first time in 1987-88. It is used to find out whether the injured person worked full time or part time, and is defined as follows:

- *Full-time employees* are those (permanent, temporary or casual) who normally work for the full agreed or award hours for a full-time employee in their occupation; or, if no agreed or award hours apply, for 35 hours or more a week.
- *Part-time employees* are all those not included in the definition above.

Original claim: *Original claims* are cases which involve the first claim against an insurer for compensation for an employment injury.

Re-opened claim: *Re-opened claims* are those which had been closed previously but for which further incapacity or medical treatment has been accepted by the insurer as being attributable to the original employment injury.

Incidence rate: The *incidence rate* is the number of accidents or diseases reported per 1000 employed persons, adjusted to exclude from those employed persons self-employed persons and Commonwealth government employees. Both these groups are not within the scope of the collection.

Related ABS publications: • *Employment Injuries, Queensland (6301.3)*, annual

All publications produced by the ABS are listed in the annual *Catalogue of Publications* (1101.0). This is available from any ABS office.

Standard symbols: The following standard symbols are used in this publication:

n.a not available for separate publication but included in totals where applicable.

- nil or less than half the unit shown.



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CANBERRA (06) 252 6627



Information Services, ABS, PO Box 10, Belconnen ACT 2616
or any ABS State office.

